

# THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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"YOU mean you're not even going to send a valentine to Ben Wade?" Martha spoke sharply to her companion, amazement, curiosity and incredulity chasing each other round and round in her agile mind.

"I told you that I am planning to do something else with my valentine money," returned Clare.

"But Ben will expect you to send him a valentine," said Martha. "If you think he won't know that you don't send one of those he'll receive you are greatly mistaken. I suppose you're going to buy something else with the money you would spend for valentines."

Clare flushed and her red lips tightened. Martha knew what she had said was a shrewd guess at what might be expected of Clare's habitual selfishness, and was surprised that her companion did not make some haughty retort to the direct charge. They sometimes argued for several minutes before Martha regained her usual leadership.

"I am planning to do something very special with the money," said Clare quietly.

"Oh, tell me what!" laughed Martha, curiosity overcoming her amazement and incredulity. She saw Clare's lips tighten again before the answer came.

"I am not going to tell you!"

"Not going to tell me!" ejaculated Martha. "We're chums and tell everything that happens to each other."

"And you tattle secret things I've told you. That's the truth, Martha, and I just can't take any chance that this valentine secret will get public."

"The idea!" gasped Martha. "I'll never tell you another of my secrets as long as I live. I won't send you a valentine, either!"

"All right!" said Clare stoutly.

"Oh, tell me what you're going to do!" cried Martha, her curiosity rampant and remembering the many happy times they had shared. She could not even yet believe that Clare would not tell her this special secret.

"I told you that I just can't take any chance of having the plan get public before it happens," insisted Clare.

## The Mystery Story Book

By Ruby Holmes Martyn

"I'll tell Ben Wade how mean you are!" threatened Martha, beside herself with chagrin and anger.

"That's up to you," returned Clare coolly.

Martha struggled frantically to regain the leadership she felt was slipping from her. She had never known Clare to be so persistently self-assertive.

"Just wait until I tell the other girls you're not sending any valentines this year. Then you won't get any yourself."

"Then I'll have to grin and bear it," said Clare. "I can't control whatever happens because I have decided to do this special thing with my money."

Martha's anger rushed to the surface. "Go ahead and do the fool thing then," she flared. "I'll find someone else to chum around with."

Swinging on her heels she left Clare to go alone along the village street. The day was balmy and she paused in the sheltered sunshine beside a store window to regain her composure. For a long

minute Martha was too angry to notice just where she was standing, and then the books scattered among the valentines in the store window attracted her attention.

"Clare is going to use her valentine money to buy that mystery story book we wanted and wanted!" she guessed.

Very slowly Martha turned away from the window display. The book the girls had wanted to read lay behind the shining plate glass. She wanted awfully to read it. Why not forestall Clare's selfish purpose and use her own valentine money to buy it her own self? Why not? Who would know if she did not send them valentines on the morrow? She could look wise without telling anyone a lie when they asked her if she sent this or that unsigned valentine. True, she had meant to send gentle, lame Janet a very special valentine. But why bother about that? Selfishness took possession of her angry heart. She would rush home now for the money and own this book before Clare could get hold of it.

But at home Martha paused to eat a lunch, and to change her money to the new red bag, and then to show the new bag to some girls whom she met on her way back to the store. Near the store she met Ben Wade carrying a neat parcel under his arm, but, though she hailed him joyously, Ben did not stop to talk as she had thought he might.

Martha's uneasy heart went thumpity-thump as she entered the warm store and asked for the mystery story book she meant to purchase.

"Just sold that particular one," said the man behind the counter.

"Ben Wade bought it!" cried Martha recalling the size of Ben's tidy parcel.

The man behind the counter laughed lightly.

"I mustn't tell on Ben!" he said. "And I have plenty of mystery stories left for you to choose from."

Already Martha's heart had stopped thump-thumping with such a horrid thud.

"I'll choose some valentines now instead of any book," she cried, ashamed at the selfish anger which had made her



"She paused beside a store window to regain her composure."



so uneasy. "I'm glad that book I asked for is sold. I don't think I would really have bought it anyhow. I'm sure I wouldn't really have taken it instead of valentines."

The valentine she intended to send to gentle, lame Janet was chosen first, and then Martha selected some for the others whom she meant to remember. What jolly fun it will be not to sign them and keep the girls guessing from whom they came. But she would go around and show them all to Janet on the way home. Janet could not get out to see the pretty valentines at the store, and Martha was impatient to show someone these she meant to send.

"How nice of you to think of me," cried Janet. "You know I'm not going to send a single valentine this year because it has cost father so much money to have my leg fixed so it will get well. I told him that knowing I will walk again ought to be enough happiness for me in one whole year."

Martha put the sheaf of valentines she had purchased into Janet's thin hands, and then realized with dismay that she had included the prettiest one which she meant for Janet herself. But she didn't falter over the expression of the idea which had suddenly popped into her quick mind.

"We'll send these valentines together. We'll take turns choosing to send. You first!"

"Clare!" cried Janet. "We'll send this prettiest one to Clare!"

Martha gasped. It was the valentine she had intended for Janet. And she had meant to leave Clare out. She opened her mouth to tell Janet how selfish and hateful Clare was but the words would not quite come from her tight throat. Somehow one did not tell frail, gentle Janet such unkind happenings. Janet took the pen and addressed the first envelope to Clare Ames, and on her way home through the twilight Martha dropped it in the corner box with the others they had made ready for the late letter collection. Clare would receive it in the morning. And Martha knew she was glad Janet had chosen to send that valentine to Clare.

On her way home from school the next afternoon Martha stopped at Janet's. And there in the lame girl's thin hands was the mystery story book she had thought she wanted to purchase. So that was why Ben Wade bought it! For gentle, lame Janet's special valentine!

"Wasn't somebody perfectly darling to give it to me!" cried Janet. "And I want you to begin to read this mystery story the minute I finish it. Oh, Martha, who could have sent it to me?"

But Martha laughed and said never a word to Janet about meeting Ben Wade with the neat parcel under his arm. But when she saw Ben she told him how fine she thought it was for him to

send that mystery story book to Janet.

"I'm going to tell her to let you read it first," concluded Martha.

"No, you won't tell her to let me read it first," objected Ben. "Clare had the bright idea that we could get that mystery story book for Janet, and most of

the money that bought it belonged to her."

"I'm going right around to tell Clare that I feel mean enough and small enough to crawl into the weeniest hole in the whole wide world!" cried Martha.

## The Slate-Colored Junco or Snowbird

By Alvin M. Peterson

THE slate-colored junco is for very good reasons also known as the slate-colored snowbird. This bird is with us during the colder months of the year. It nests and spends the summers north of us, but migrates southward late in the fall, staying with us all winter and leaving again in the spring. You are quite likely to see it in winter, when the ground is blanketed with snow, flitting about over the snow, feasting on seeds and seeming happy and contented. It seems to live comfortably in spite of the snow, and one naturally thinks of the bird when he thinks of snow.

This little bird belongs to the same family of birds as the sparrows. It is about six inches long, has dark-slate upperparts and white underparts. Its stout cone-shaped bill is yellowish-white or straw-colored. It has white outer tail feathers and because the tail is spread when the bird is flying or excited, the white then shows to advantage. If you see a dark-colored bird, during the winter months, that has white at the sides of its tail, you may be quite sure it is a slate-colored junco or slate-colored snowbird.

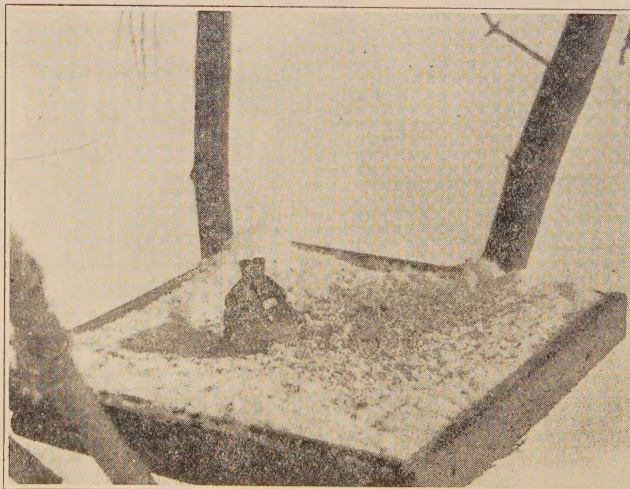
The junco has a number of call-notes, and at times it sings sweetly. These birds nearly always live in flocks. They live largely on weed and other small seeds, and the flocks as a rule are to be seen in waste places, in fields, along fences, about vacant lots and along railways and streams. Sometimes, in winter, however, one, two, three or four of them are to be found living about our homes, where they are sure of a food

supply. During the spring months, the birds of a flock are quite musical. Then, they twitter continually in low but pleasant tones. Sometimes, when feeding, the birds utter notes of contentment that sound like "chew, chew, chew." When alarmed, they utter sharp "chicking" or "clicking" notes, lower, but something like the common "clicking" alarm note of the brown thrasher.

The junco is easily attracted to the yard, in winter, by means of food. Actually, all you need do to have one or two of these birds for winter neighbors is to scatter the sweepings from the house over the snow, from which they can glean a few crumbs. Juncos live almost entirely on small seeds. Consequently, they should be offered crumbs, oatmeal, small seeds, chaff and crushed or ground grains. Crumbs and oatmeal are no doubt the best and simplest foods to give them. These may be scattered on the ground or the snow. But a better way to serve these foods is to tramp the snow down, or to place them on a simple food tray, like the one shown in the illustration. A food tray of this kind may be placed near a window, so that you can watch and study your birds, when they are feasting. But the tray should be kept fairly free of snow, and a little food should be put out for the birds each day.

Juncos very often are to be found in the company of other birds. Very often, a flock consists of juncos and tree sparrows, because these birds are very much alike in their habits. Tree sparrows have reddish-brown crowns and round spots in the middle of their breasts. Both tree sparrows and juncos live almost entirely on weed seeds, nest north of us, but spend the colder months of the year with us.

Juncos are very useful birds, because they destroy many tons of weed seeds each year. All fall, winter and spring long, they are busy hunting, eating and thus destroying countless weed seeds. If these seeds were not destroyed, they would later produce weeds which would annoy and cause us much extra work.



LUNCHEON FOR ONE



## Guests from Yugoslavia

By M. Louise C. Hastings

COMPANY was expected at dinner. Jack and Marlyne were quite excited, for this company was "different." First of all, there was to be a friend of Father's, a professor from somewhere across the ocean, and then there was a boy of uncertain age, who had come to America with him to travel. It was this last guest that interested Jack and Marlyne, for they had no idea how he would be dressed, or how he would act, or how much English he could speak, or anything about him.

This boy was a Serbian, and Jack and Marlyne had been searching their new encyclopedia for everything they could find about the boys and girls of his country. But they had not found much information except about the history of the country and the story of the many insurrections that had been a part of it as the Serbs struggled for independence. Maybe they could ask the Serbian boy questions! Both Jack and Marlyne hoped that he would be friendly.

"Professor Clement, won't you tell us something about this country that you know so well?" asked Mother as they began dinner. "Does Milosh belong to this same country?" she added, smiling across the table at the sober-faced youth from foreign lands.

"Yes, Milosh belongs to this new land," replied Professor Clement. "He will tell you all about his home, for he speaks fairly good English. I have taught him myself." Then he continued, "As to the country, it has undergone many changes since the World War. Europe has a new map now. Several countries have been renamed, and some have enlarged their borders."

"My country," spoke up Milosh slowly, in carefully thought-out English, "is an old one with a new name. It is now called Yugoslavia. It takes in Serbia, where I come from, and several other countries. Since the war Yugoslavia has come into its own."

"Yes," echoed Professor Clement, "the Slav dominions are all united into one kingdom now. Translated, Yugoslavia means 'the Land of Southern Slavs.' Serbia was a small country before the war with only three million inhabitants, but since the Southern Slavs have combined with it, the new kingdom contains over thirteen million."

"I know one thing about Milosh's country," said Jack. "Belgrade is the capital. Marlyne and I looked it up in our geographies."

"Yes," said Milosh, looking at Jack. "It is a new Belgrade now. After the war it was a heap of ruins. Now it is filled with new buildings and many improvements. Some day it will be a fine city."

"How old do you think Milosh is?"



### Mary Sue's Valentine

By ELVIRA JONES

I'm a heart-shaped piece of paper  
With a frilly edge of lace,  
And in the very midst of me's  
A wiggly Cupid's face.

I was made in kindergarten  
By little Mary Sue.  
She wrote across the back of me  
The message, "I love you!"

And gave me to her mother  
For a Valentine today.  
You should have heard the words of  
praise  
I heard her mother say;

For I'm really not as handsome  
As a valentine should be,  
But I was made by Mary Sue  
And her mother's proud of me!

She hung me near some paintings rare  
Upon her bedroom wall.  
And really (this is confidential)  
She likes me best of all!

whispered Marlyne when she could get Jack's attention. "Ask him!"

So when there came a pause in the conversation, Jack asked, "Are you my age, Milosh?"

Professor Clement laughed. "I told Milosh that everybody would think he was a young boy. Why, he is twenty-five years old! He attends the Belgrade University where I teach. That is how I came across him."

At this remark Jack and Marlyne looked chagrined. They had supposed that he was their age! Now they couldn't ask him any questions!

Father, sitting at the head of the table, noticed their crestfallen faces, and decided to draw this young man out, for the sake of his own children. "Tell us about the boys and girls of Serbia," he suggested. "How did your boyhood differ from the boyhood of my son?"

Jack and Marlyne sent their father warm glances of appreciation, and Milosh began. "I attend the University in Belgrade, but my home is in the country. Almost everyone in Serbia owns

his own home. It may be only a tiny place, but as every peasant owns his land he usually builds upon it. There are no very rich or very poor in Serbia. It is an agricultural land, and an educated peasant may rise to any position, for there is no class distinction. I am a peasant, and still I attend the University."

"Yes, and let me say that, though Milosh comes from peasant stock, he is making good in the University, and has earned the respect and admiration of everybody there," said Professor Clement.

"Serbs have had hard times," continued Milosh, "so we have learned to be very frugal. We do not spend all our money, but always put aside some for a rainy day."

"One of their proverbs," interrupted Professor Clement, "runs, 'Keep white coins for black days.' Pretty good advice, I call it." And Father winked at his children, for one of their household mottoes was similar.

"Boys do not usually go to school before they are seven, but I did, and I had to tramp miles each day, back and forth, with my bag of books hung from my shoulder. Bread and cheese used to be my dinner. Education is free, just as it is in America. I plan to travel this year in your big cities, and study the methods in your schools. We have no private schools."

"Don't you have any fun?" asked Jack, thinking of his own happy boyhood.

"We have no toys to play with as you do," replied Milosh, "nor picture books, and we seldom play games, but in winter we coast in our toboggans and go skiing. Conditions in Serbia are very different from the rest of Yugoslavia. In some parts of our new country children's lives are free from care."

"Serbian children are serious-minded," said Professor Clement. "They really have little fun in childhood. A boy as old as Jack will talk politics easily and enjoys current events. Girls have not been given much education in schools, but now they are obliged to go, and they are very happy over the change."

"But our girls have always been taught to be good housekeepers," exclaimed Milosh. "They are always good cooks. Can you cook, Marlyne?"

"Yes, I can make cake and some easy desserts," replied Marlyne, "and Mother is planning to teach me to bake bread."

"When you return to our city, after your year of travel," said Mother, "we will entertain you again, and then perhaps Marlyne will be able to serve you some of her cooking."

To educate the heart, one must be willing to go out of himself and to come into loving contact with others.

—James Freeman Clarke.



# THE BEACON CLUB

## The Editor's Post Box

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

4 MENDON ST.,  
UPTON, MASS.

Dear Editor: I am a member of the Beacon Club but have lost my pin so I am writing to ask if you will send me another. I would appreciate it if you would do so. I am twelve years old and in the eighth grade of the Upton High School. I would like to have someone correspond with me, whether young or old. I have corresponded with many members of the Club and had great fun. I go to the Unitarian Church of West Upton and my teacher's name is Miss Lydia Ball.

Sincerely,  
EMMA NELSON.

209 WAIT AVE.,  
ITHACA, N. Y.

Dear Editor: I go to the Unitarian Church in Ithaca. I enjoy reading *The Beacon* every Sunday and would like to become a member of the Beacon Club. I am ten years old and am in the fifth grade at school. My teacher's name is Mrs. Pierson; my minister's name is Frank L. Gredler. Last week at our church we had a bazaar and two suppers. I would like to correspond with someone of my age.

Yours truly,  
EMILY HOSMER.

107 WILSON ST.,  
KEENE, N. H.

Dear Beacon Club: Here is a story about my trip to Mount Vernon:

Frederick, a boy four years old, with dark brown hair and greenish-brown eyes, was thinking what a good time he was going to have in Deland, Florida. The next morning when he woke up he dressed himself quickly, hurried down stairs, and found his mother and Aunt Jessie packing. It took three days to go to Washington. The first day Frederick wanted to go to Mount Vernon so he and his mother and aunt drove to Washington's home; they saw his library and such a lot of books. After a long while they went the rest of the way to Florida. They had a happy time and hope to go again.

Yours truly,  
FREDERICK WYMAN.

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

42 HIGH ST.,  
ORANGE, N. J.

Dear Editor: I am twelve years old and go to the Unitarian church of Orange. My teacher is Mr. Hill. Our superintendent is Mr. Roman, and the minister is Rev. J. S. Loughran. I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club and to correspond with a girl of my age. I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and like it very much, especially the puzzles and stories.

Very sincerely,  
MARY BOOTH.

## Lincoln and the Kittens

By FLORENA A. HAYLER

Many stories are told of Lincoln's love and tenderness toward animals. It seems he was ever on the side of the defenseless.

On one occasion when he visited General Grant's army headquarters, Lincoln discovered three little motherless kittens wandering about the tent and mewing piteously. In the midst of a busy conference, he picked up the kittens and holding them on his knees stroked and comforted them while he discussed grave problems of war with his generals. When the conference was ended, Lincoln called one of the men aside and said to him, "I hope you'll see that these motherless little waifs are given plenty of milk and treated kindly." The man promised they should be given into the charge of the cook who would look after them properly. This seemed to relieve Lincoln's anxiety; but many times during his visit he was seen fondling and playing with the kittens. The hand that had signed the commissions of all the heroic men who served the Union's cause was just as deft at tenderly caressing three stray kittens.

'Tis only the truly great who have time for the little kindnesses of life.

## A Prayer

Dear Life of all we feel and see,  
Please help me good and kind to be;  
If in my work or in my play  
I have done a wrong today,  
Forgive thy child, dear Lord, I pray.  
Oh, may my thoughts be clean and bright  
When with tomorrow's coming light  
Again I try to live aright.

Adapted by CLARA COOK HELVIE

## Puzzlers

### Word Triangle

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1 *
2 * *
3 * * *
4 * * * *
5 * * * * *
6 * * * * *
7 * * * * *
8 * * * * *
9 * * * * *
10 * * * * * (II)

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1. The ninth consonant.
2. A negative.
3. A woodland deity.
4. A number of persons associated for a particular purpose.
5. Title given to Mohammed's successor.
6. A figure in geometry.
7. Proceeding from the side.
8. Low-styled, irregular verse.
9. Town in Spain.
10. And 1 to II diagonally—an American poet.

ALICE A. KEEN.

## Charade

Janie threw some snowballs, she  
Flung a third of them at me,  
And the rest of them at Lou,  
Sister of her sister Sue.  
If at Lou she threw twice three,  
How many did she throw at me?

CHARLES NEVERS HOLMES.

## Answers to Puzzlers in No. 17

*Books of the Bible.*—1. Judges. 2. St. Mark. 3. Ruth. 4. Chronicles. 5. Romans. 6. Hebrews. 7. James. 8. Daniel. 9. Peter. 10. Titus.

*Omission Charade.*—Char-it-able.

*Write-Right Puzzle.*—99 9/9ths.

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